

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 5, 2002

CONTACT: Israel Klein

(202) 225-2836

MARKEY, REPS OPPOSE ARCTIC REFUGE OIL REVENUE IN PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

51 Sign bipartisan letter to Budget Committee Chairman Nussle urging the removal of leasing revenue in FY 2003 budget

WASHINGTON, D.C. --

Today Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-MA) and 50 other representatives sent a letter to Rep. James Nussle (R-IA), Chairman of the Budget Committee, asking him to reject President Bush's budget request to assume revenue from auctioning oil leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The 41 Democrats and 10 Republicans oppose the inclusion of revenues from oil activity that is prohibited under current law in the refuge.

"The President's budget represents wishful thinking rather than economic reality. Oil leasing is not allowed in the Arctic Refuge and it is irresponsible of the President to count on \$1.2 billion in revenues from the sale of leases in that pristine wilderness," said Rep. Markey.

Because of the Arctic Refuge contains one of the most magnificent and rare unspoiled ecosystems in the world, Congress in 1980 prohibited oil and gas exploration or production on the coastal plain of the refuge. This summer an amendment to the House energy bill blocking drilling in the Arctic Refuge, sponsored by Rep. Markey, narrowly failed 206-223. Furthermore, in a recent AP poll, the majority of Americans opposed opening this area for oil exploration.

"95% of the Alaskan North Slope is available for oil exploration and development and recent exploration in the Naval Petroleum Reserve-Alaska suggests that there is plenty of oil outside of the Arctic Refuge. BP has given up on oil in the refuge and the President should too," concluded Rep. Markey. "We hope Chairman Nussle will take into account the current law and the will of the American people when developing the budget."

Rep. Markey is the chief House sponsor of HR 770, the Morris K. Udall Arctic Wilderness Act of 2001, with Rep. Nancy Johnson and 150 other co-sponsors. Visit www.house.gov/markey for more information.

###